



Sunday, August 4, 2019

Breakout Session H43 • 4:00-5:00 pm • Grand Ballroom A/B

Interveners - Key Members of the Educational Team

**Beth Kennedy, DeafBlind Central: Michigan's Training
& Resource Project**

Presenter Information

Beth Kennedy is the Project Director for DeafBlind Central: Michigan's Training & Resource Project and the Director of the DeafBlind Intervener (DBI) online certificate program through Central Michigan University (CMU). Beth has worked in the field of deafblindness for twenty-eight years and has held a variety of jobs working directly with people who are DeafBlind and as a consultant. She earned her Master's Degree from Boston College and is currently working on a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at CMU. Beth's areas of interest include deafblindness, communication, concept development, interveners, and intervener training.

Presentation Abstract

Interveners provide support for students who are DeafBlind. CHARGE Syndrome is a leading cause of deafblindness, and people who have CHARGE can benefit from the increased access to environmental and educational information that interveners provide. The intervener can serve as a key member of the educational team, helping students who are deafblind to achieve more and reach their potential. Interveners accomplish this by working with other team members to increase the implementation of the IEP goals.

Learning Objectives

- Increase knowledge of the role of the intervener for a student who is DeafBlind
- Increase knowledge of the role of the intervener on the team
- Increase knowledge of the benefit of credentialed interveners for students who are deafblind and the other members of the team



Interveners- Key Members of the Educational Team

Beth Kennedy, M.Ed.

DB Central Michigan's Training & Resource Project

DeafBlind Intervener Program

We will cover:

- Definition of intervener
- Role of the intervener
- Canadian Principles of Intervention
- How interveners are trained
- Ideas for advocacy
- Research on interveners



What Is an Intervener?

The National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) definition:
“Interveners...provide access to information and communication and facilitate the development of social and emotional well-being for children who are deaf-blind.”

NCDB recommends that interveners have training that is based on the CEC competencies for interveners.

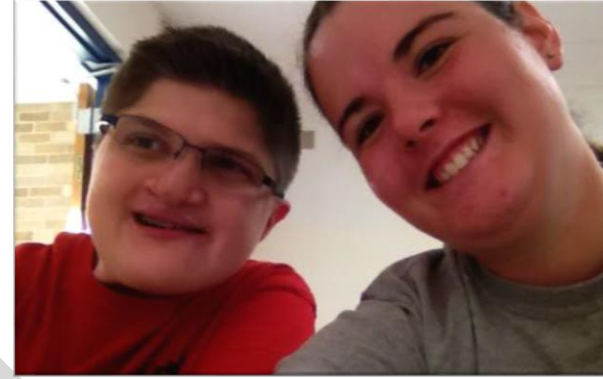
July 2013 (rev. 2019)

Full definition available on www.nationaldb.org.

Interveners Are NOT:

- Paraprofessionals
- Interpreters
- Teachers
- Therapists
- Consultants
- Nurses
- Spies





Interveners Have a
Trusting Relationship
with their Students

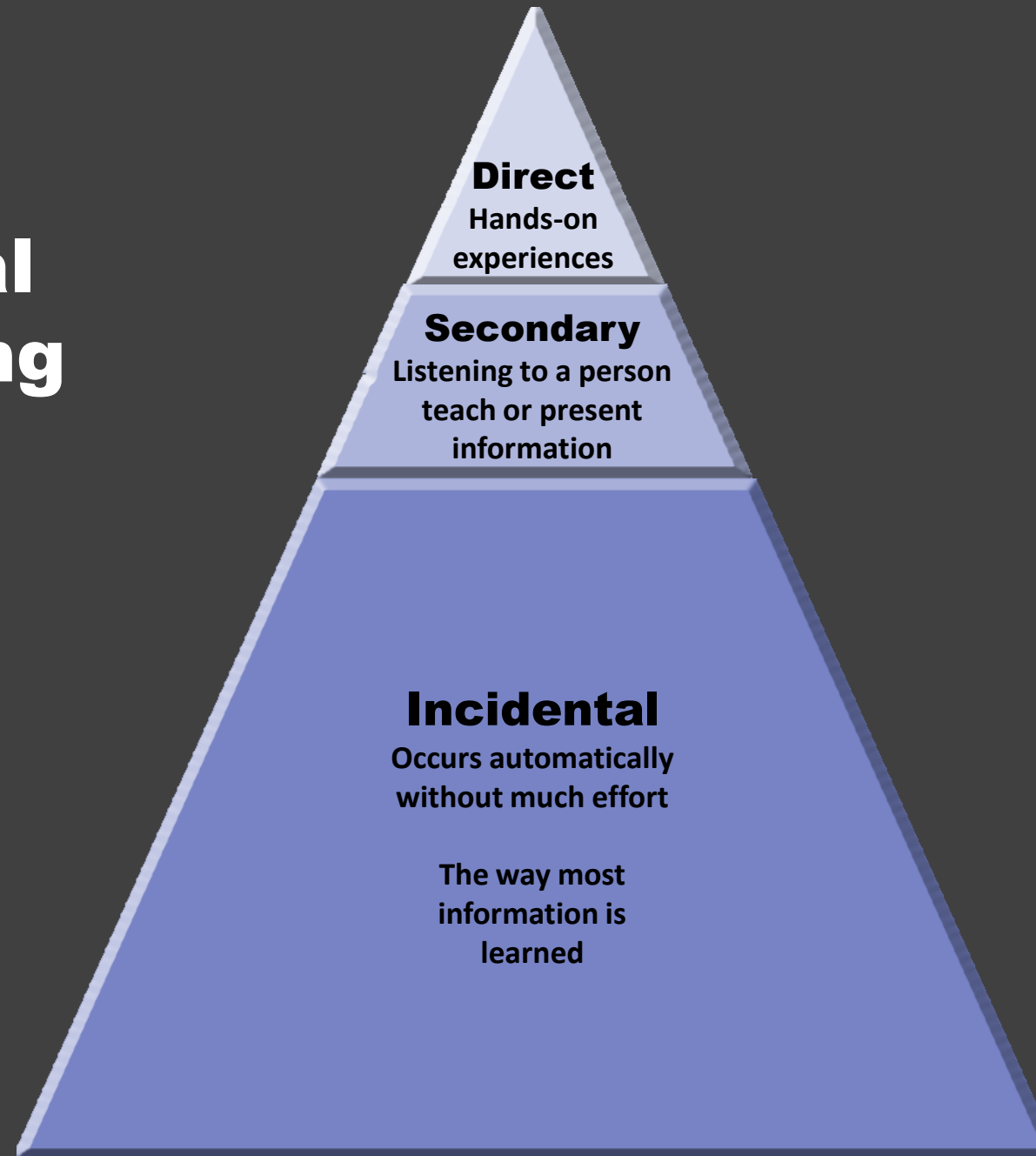
Maurice said it best...

“Interveners are Freedom”

Interveners on the team

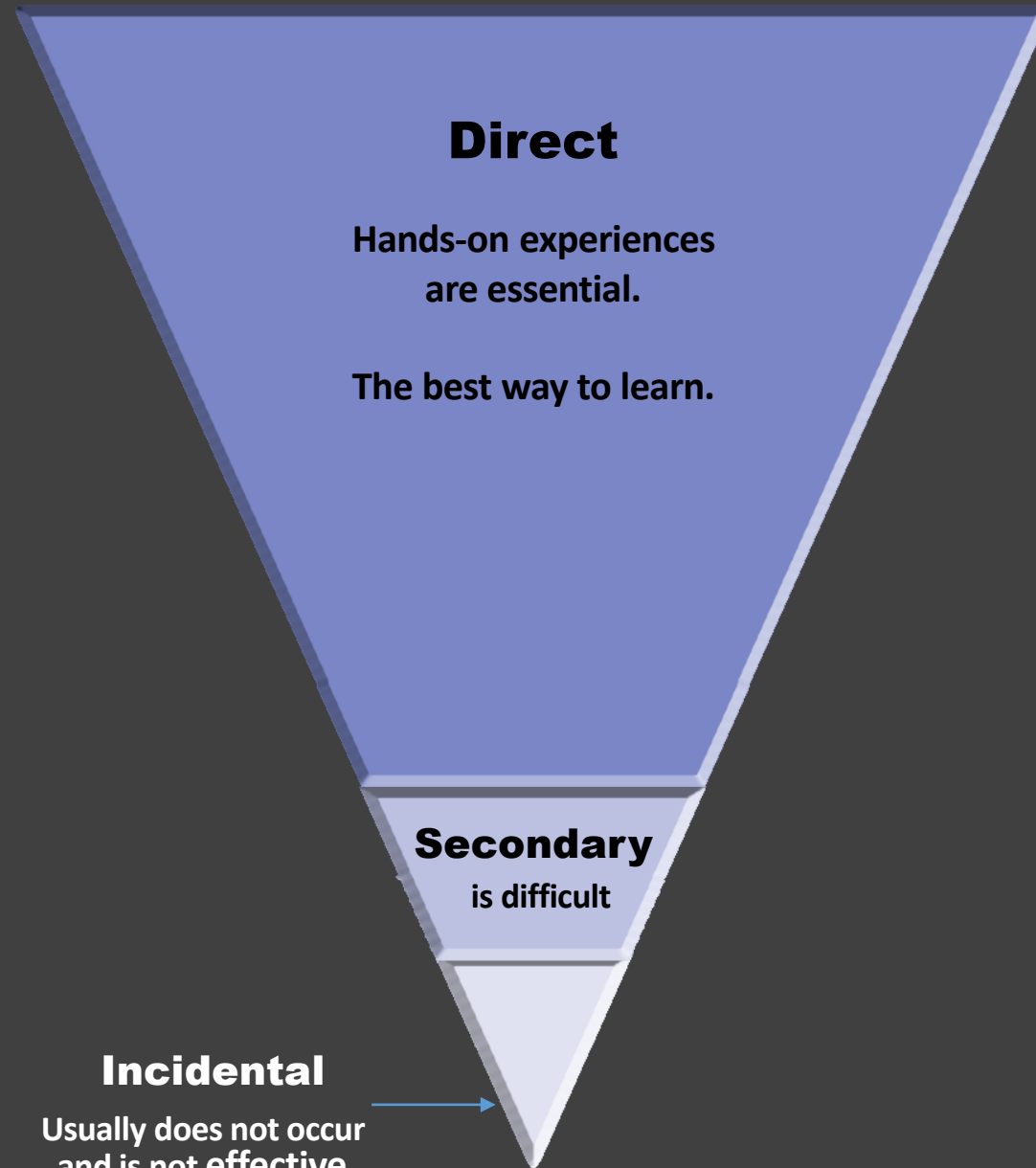
- Interveners work with the teacher
- Interveners are present during therapies and services
- Interveners provide support during assessments
- Interveners are a part of team meetings
- Interveners and intervention are new concepts

Typical Learning



Alsop, 2012

Deafblind Learning



Alsop, 2012

Interveners vs. Intervention

- Consistency is key
- Interveners need breaks
- Life happens- have a sub
- Students rely on information and access, not the person

Principles of Intervention- CDBA

1. Total and unconditional belief in and respect for an individual who is deafblind
2. Total and unconditional belief in the value of intervention for individuals who are deafblind
3. The amount of intervention and the form it will take must be individualized to meet the specific needs and desires of each individual who is deafblind

Principles of Intervention, con't

- 4. Individuals who are deafblind have a right to access information in their modes of communication
- 5. Intervention is, “Doing with, not for”
- 6. No assumptions should be made regarding the abilities of an individual with deafblindness

Principles of Intervention, con't

7. Never underestimate the importance of the relationship between the intervener and the individual who is deafblind
8. The process of intervention must always provide the individual who is deafblind the information required for anticipation, motivation, communication, and confirmation

Principles of Intervention, con't

9. Every experience is an opportunity to provide information and encourage interaction
10. The focus of intervention should always be on the needs of the individual who is deafblind
11. Intervention is recognized as a process that requires interveners to have specific skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to be effective in providing the best possible opportunity for people who are deafblind to gather information, process it and develop communication, concepts, and skills

Principles in Action

- Google “Jarvis Goes to the Drum Store”
- All 11 Principles are captured in 12 minutes



Training

National Credential

- Higher education programs- CMU, USU

Certificate eligibility

- State project training
- OHOA modules

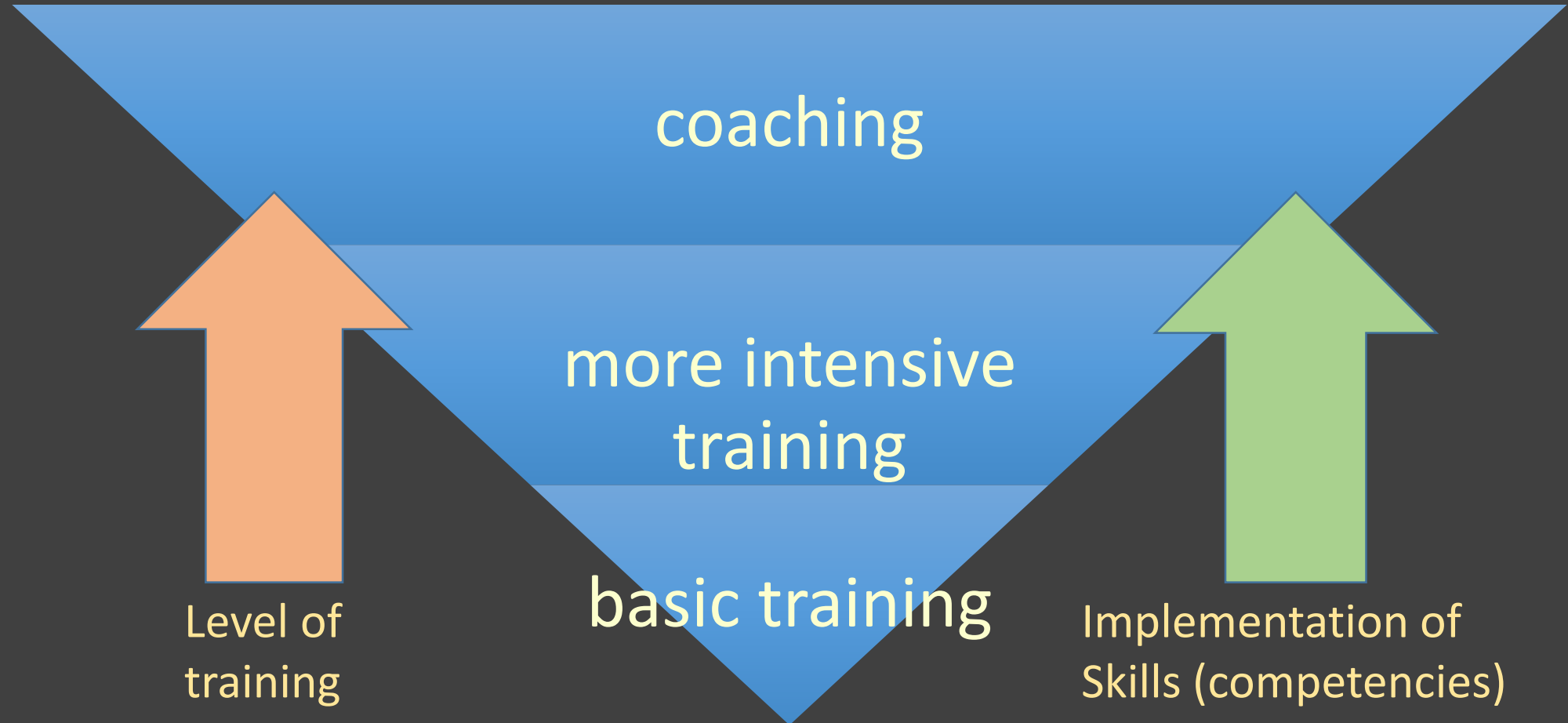




National Credential

- Offered through the National Resource Center for Paraeducators (NRCPPara)
- Requires the completion of a higher education program including coaching
- Candidates submit a portfolio demonstrating the competencies identified for interveners by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Pay \$100 processing fee

Proposed Conceptual Framework



Advocating for an Intervener

- Interveners are not federally mandated
- Some states have passed legislation or policies mandating interveners
- NCDB- *IEP Discussion Guide*
- Memo from the USDOE regarding funding



Research on Interveners

Watkins, S., Clark, T., Strong, C., & Barringer, D. (1994). The effectiveness of and intervener model of services for young deafblind children. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 139(4), 404-409.

Research that Mentions Interveners

- Correa-Torres, S. (2008). The nature of the social experiences of students with deaf-blindness who are educated in inclusive settings. *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness*, 102(5), 272-283.
- Nelson, C. Hyte, H., & Greenfield, R. (2016). Increasing self-regulation and classroom participation of a child who is deafblind. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 160(5), 496-509.
- Parker, A. T. & Nelson, C. (2016). Toward s comprehensive system of personnel development in deafblind education. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 161(4), 486-501.

What about Research on How to Train?

To date, I have not been able to find research on training interveners. Research that could be applicable:

- French, N. K., & Cabell, E. A. (1993). Are community college training programs for paraeducators feasible? *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 17(2), 131-140.
- Breton, W. (2010). Special education paraprofessionals: Perceptions of preservice preparation, supervision, and ongoing developmental training. *International Journal of Special Education*, 25(1), 34-45.
- Douglas, S. McNaughton, D., & Light, J. (2014). Online training for paraeducators to support the communication of young children. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 35(3), 223-242.



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Comparison of Possible Supports for Students Who Are DeafBlind

An intervener, paraprofessional, and/or interpreter can play a critical role in meeting the educational needs of a student who is DeafBlind. Every student who is DeafBlind has unique needs, so supports necessary to provide access will vary from student to student. Think about the student's support needs. Do the support needs change in different environments? If so, the level of support necessary could vary across environments. Below, each position is briefly described. The boxes in the columns below the given role outline the student support needs that might be satisfied by each one.

The team may want to reference "Are Intervener Services Appropriate for Your Student With Deaf-Blindness? An IEP Discussion Guide," available through the National Center on Deaf-Blindness.

Intervener: A person who has specialized training in deafblindness; provides 1:1 support to a student who is DeafBlind by facilitating communication, language, and concept development, providing access to auditory and visual information	Paraprofessional: A person who may have some training for specific job duties; provides support in a small group or 1:1 capacity; may be assigned to a student or a classroom	Interpreter: A person who is trained to interpret English to American Sign Language (or another manual system) and ASL to English; may have training to accommodate for vision loss/deafblindness; may serve as a language model for the student
Student has both a vision and a hearing loss, necessitating specialized one on one support to participate in/provide access to activities, instructional and non-instructional, on and off site	Student functions well in small groups, may occasionally require 1:1 assistance	Student requires translation of information, from one language to another. The student is able to process the information and determine key points with minimal support.
Student support needs necessitate ready accommodations by a person trained in deafblindness in order to participate	Student support needs can be met by someone with basic training in deafblindness	Student requires the skill level of a nationally or state certified interpreter, who can provide appropriate accommodations for access (e.g. restricted field, tactile, etc.)
Student requires support for communication, language, interactions, concept development, curricular modifications, sensory losses, etc.	Student requires only minimal adaptations of classroom materials that can easily be accommodated by the team	Student is able to access interpreted information independently, and is able to seek information or clarification as needed independently
Student requires support to connect with and interact with others	Student requires only minimal support when interacting with peers and others	Student interacts independently, with the support of an interpreter, as needed
Student needs prompts and individualized support to attend/participate	Student requires occasional prompts and support to attend/participate	Student is able to attend for long periods of time with little to no redirection
Student performance is significantly improved by support provided by a consistent, trusted person	Student interacts with and performs comparably with a variety of people	Student performance is typically not impacted by presence or absence of specific people
Student requires support to enhance her/his independence	Student requires occasional support/ prompts to work independently	Student is able to function independently, and makes independent decisions without prompts

References: 1. "What is My Role?" A Comparison of the Responsibilities of Interpreters, Interveners, and Support Service Providers (Susanne Morgan, MA, CI, CT) and, 2. Alsop, L., Robinson, C., Goehl, K., Lace, J., Belote, M., & Rodriguez-Gil, G. (2007). *Interveners in the classroom: Guidelines for teams working with students who are deafblind*. Logan, UT: SKI-HI Institute.

INTERVENERS: “DO WITH, NOT FOR”

Who are interveners?

- ★ Paraprofessionals with specialized training in deafblindness who work 1-on-1 with a student who is deafblind
- ★ Those who are credentialed by the National Resource Center for Paraeducators or who are actively working toward the credential

Who do interveners work with?

Students who:

- ★ Have a combined vision and hearing loss and are likely to have additional disabilities
- ★ Need consistent 1-on-1 support to participate in/access activities and enhance their independence
- ★ Require support for communication, language interactions, concept development, curricular modifications, sensory losses, etc.
- ★ Require support to connect with and interact with others
- ★ May not otherwise access or attend to instruction

What do interveners do?

- ★ Provide **access** to auditory and visual information
- ★ Facilitate communication, language, and concept development in students who are deafblind
- ★ Maintain a trusting, interactive relationship to promote social and emotional well-being
- ★ Help students who are deafblind reach their potential
- ★ Work with the team to increase educational outcomes

Research:

- Correa-Torres, S. (2008). The nature of the social experiences of students with deaf-blindness who are educated in inclusive settings. *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness*, 102, 272-283.
- Nelson, C., Hyte, H., & Greenfield, R. (2016). Increasing self-regulation and classroom participation of a child who is deafblind. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 160, 496-509.
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This document was developed using the National Center on Deaf-Blindness fact sheet entitled “Definition of Intervener Services and Interveners in Educational Settings,” the Utah State University fact sheet entitled “Educational Interveners for Children Who are DeafBlind,” and the DeafBlind Central fact sheet entitled “Comparison of Possible Supports for Students who are DeafBlind.”



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